

Chapter 5: Training Peer Educators

Importance/Relevance

- A well-designed training program equips Peer Educators with the necessary knowledge and skills needed to be successful in their position.
- In addition, the training Peer Educators are given sets the tone for their tenure in the position.
- In many cases, Peer Educators are required to be trained in certain areas deemed necessary by the federal government and UC.
- Your training should be a direct connection to the Peer Educator job responsibilities and learning outcomes, as well as federally or university mandated training.
- Depending on the Peer Educator role, there will be other necessary training, such as First-Aid, CPR, etc. If you are a certified Peer Educator Program, then you may have additional areas/topics that are required as part of that certification.

Questions to Answer/Things to Consider

- Are your Peer Educators mandatory reporters? What are the federal and UC specific trainings that are required?
- Are there national standards you must meet for your training program?
- What competency areas do you need to cover during training?
 - What should be covered pre-service, during service, etc.?
- What is your training budget?
- When will your training take place and how often?
- Where will your training take place?
- How much time will you need to cover your content?
- Will you facilitate all of training or will you invite others in to facilitate?
- How will you incorporate returning staff into training?
- What materials/supplies are needed for training?

Informational Content

Federally/UC Mandated Training

If your Peer Educators are required reporters/campus security authorities, then they must receive training on Title IX, Clery, and Mental Health Services. Additionally, if Peer Educators have access to student grade information or are involved in academic support, it is required that they are FERPA trained.

What is Title IX?

[Title IX](#) of the Education Amendments of 1972 is a federal civil rights law that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex in the university's programs and activities. Sexual harassment, including sexual violence and retaliation are forms of discrimination prohibited by Title IX.

- The university does not tolerate sex discrimination, sexual harassment, or retaliation and takes steps to ensure that students, employees, and third parties are not subject to a hostile environment in university programs or activities.

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Title IX Training

Title IX training can only be completed by the Title IX office and is 1 hour long. The training covers an overview of Title IX, what type of issues are covered under Title IX and thus should be reported, and strategies for taking the report in a respectful way. You can find a copy of the previous presentation [here](#).

Clery Act and HEOA Information

The University of Cincinnati is required by federal law to comply with the Jeanne Clery Disclosure of Campus Security Policy and Campus Crime Statistics Act (Clery Act) and Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA). In accordance with these acts, each year UC prepares an [Annual Security and Fire Report](#). This report contains campus crime and fire statistics for the previous three years on all UC campuses, as well as descriptions of:

- UC Public Safety Services
- Fire Policies
- Safety Equipment
- University Safety Programs

This report is released annually on or before October 1.

What Must be Reported?

All criminal activity, regardless of the location or whether it is a Clery applicable crime, must be reported to the University of Cincinnati as soon as it is disclosed to a staff/faculty/employee, unless that staff/faculty/employee is a medical professional, licensed counselor (acting under their licensure), or a pastoral counselor.

Clery Training

Clery training should be completed by the UC [Clery Specialist](#) and lasts approximately 1 hour.

Mental Health Services

Depending on the level of training you want your Peer Educator to complete, [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (CAPS) will present to your group. Complete the [CAPS Outreach Request](#) form to schedule their presentation.

What is FERPA?

Federal records privacy law entitled, "The Family Educational rights and Privacy Act of 1974" (FERPA) prevents any UC office from releasing information to you regarding the employee's spouse or domestic partner, or dependent(s) education or billing records. Any Peer Educator with access to student records must be FERPA trained.

FERPA Training

The University of Cincinnati is currently developing an online training module that covers FERPA. Your Peer Educators should use this online training module to obtain FERPA training. If the Peer Educator is unable to use the online module, your department is responsible for training your Peer Educators on FERPA

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College Reading and Learning Association Requirements for Certification

Depending on your Peer Educator Program, you may decide that you want your students to be certified Peer Educators. One of the national programs that certifies Peer Educators is the [College Reading and Learning Association](#) (CRLA). CRLA certifications include: International TUTOR Training Program Certification (ITTPC) and International MENTOR Training Program Certification (IMTPC). There are three levels of certification through each program.

- Requirements for International TUTOR Training Program Certification (ITTPC) can be found [here](#).
- International MENTOR Training Program Certification (IMTPC) can be found [here](#).

There are applications, fees, and renewals/re-certifications with each program.

Potential Competency Areas for Peer Educators

By the time you start planning training, you should already have a job description written and should have hired candidates to fill your positions. Here are some questions and steps to help guide your training:

- What are the areas in the job description that you need to train your Peer Educators on?
- When they start their position on the first-day, what will they need to know to be successful?
- What do you want to accomplish during training (i.e., what are your learning outcomes?)

Using those three questions (and your answers), here are some general best practices and competency areas to help you get started:

- Vision and Mission of your department/office
- Daily, weekly, monthly responsibilities and expectations
- Instructions on how to find needed resources (if paid, clocking-in and out, BlackBoard resources, research protocols, etc.)
- Connections with other offices/departments on-campus that might be pertinent to their responsibilities
 - Contact those office early enough to get them on the training schedule
- Professional behavior/ethics
- Your departmental/office policies
- Designated time for Peer Educators to work together and ask questions
- Content specific to your department/office
- Leadership and mentoring skills
- Building rapport and motivating individuals
- Mentoring boundaries/office referrals
- Public speaking skills
- Team building skills
- Inclusion/Cultural Awareness

Logistics of Training

When planning training, beyond thinking about the content, you must also think about the logistics.

Some of those questions include:

- What is your training budget?
- When will your training take place and how often?
- Where will your training take place?

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- How long will you need to cover your content?
- Will you facilitate all of training or will you invite others in to facilitate?
- How will you incorporate returning staff into training?
- What materials/supplies are needed for training?

Below are some best practices/things to consider:

- Budget
 - Be sure to include all materials and supplies needed in your budget (paper costs, pens, markers, nametags, folders, etc.)
 - Consider meals and snacks, including beverages in total cost
 - Note if there is a cost associated with speakers, venues, rental equipment such as podiums, mics, projectors, etc.
- When and How Often?
 - Training should take place prior to the role starting. Options include:
 - Pre-service (on-line videos, readings, etc. prior to the actual training)
 - Training (in-person)
 - On-going training while Peer Educator is in the position
 - Will you plan to have training at the beginning of each semester/term?
- Where?
 - The location for Peer Educator training is essential. The space will determine how training can be facilitated.
 - If there are round tables, this encourages more conversation and interaction.
 - If you are in an auditorium, this encourages lecture style facilitation.
 - Keep in mind: There are limited large spaces on UC's campus. Access to view spaces available for reservation, can be found [here](#).
 - You should plan to reserve a large space on-campus at least 6 months in advance or you may run the risk of no spaces being available.
 - Reservations can also be made at the [African-American Cultural and Resource Center](#), as well as [Kingsgate Marriott](#) (additional fees apply) by contacting them directly.
- Length of Time?
 - In any paid Peer Educator position, training must not surpass either the 24 hour role in a given semester that a student is taking classes or 40 hours outside of that term.
 - The schedule for training generally may last anywhere from 10-40 hours, depending on the needs of your department/office.
- Facilitation Style and Strategy
 - Inviting others to help facilitate your training on their topics of expertise is best practice. It allows your Peer Educators to hear from someone other than yourself and starts to create partnerships across campus.
 - Determine specific areas your Peer Educators need to be trained on and begin to reach out to individuals on campus who can help facilitate those sessions.
 - In training Peer Educators, it is important to make sure the style of your presentations varies.
 - Don't always lecture.

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- Put them in small groups, facilitate activities or assessments, or perform skits or case-studies.
- Variety will ensure Peer Educators are engaged and actively participating in training.
- Incorporation of Returning Staff
 - Returning staff need to be invested in the training curriculum.
 - One of the best ways to ensure they feel valued and appreciated is to have them share their experiences with newly hired Peer Educators.
 - Involve returners in icebreakers, panels, presentations, etc.
- Materials/Supplies Needed
 - A week or two prior to training go through your training schedule and make a list of each handout and/or materials needed to facilitate that session.
 - Take enough extra paper, pens, markers, etc. for the tables.
 - If you are giving your Peer Educators a resource manual or a handbook, make sure you give printing services enough time to create what you are expecting, usually about 3 weeks to a month in advance.
 - Determine what resources you will have electronically and what you will print for training.
 - If you are giving your Peer Educators folders or packets of information, make sure you have extra copies.
 - Additionally, if you are assigning small groups/table assignments, be aware this can take a substantial amount of time depending on how strategic you want to be.

Current Implementation Examples

To provide you with an example of what one Peer Educator Training looks like in a current, well-established peer education program, we are going to look at the Peer Leader Program with First Year Experience & Learning Communities.

- FYE & LCs hire approximately 150 Peer Leaders for Fall Semester
- Position begins the first day of the fall academic semester (for Fall 2016, this is August 22nd)
- Prior to Training:
 - Peer Leaders are required to read the Common Read for the upcoming academic year and are compensated for 6 hours, as long as they receive at least an 80% on their assessment
- Training is held August 8th-12th (two weeks prior to semester start)
- Training is approximately 40 hours
- Training is held in Nippert West Pavilion, circular tables with chairs for Peer Leaders
- Because FYE & LCs employ so many co-op students, they have in-person training (required unless there is an academic conflict) and an on-line training option
- On-boarding through Human Resources will be done as part of the training schedule
- There is a welcome and staff introductions at the start of Day 1
- Time is set aside to go over the training schedule and Peer Leaders receive a copy of the schedule printed in their training folders
- Setting training norms is done on the first day and checking in on those norms is done at least once a day
- Each day during training, there are 15 minutes allotted for check-in and 15 minutes at the end of the day for a re-cap

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- Icebreakers/team builders are spread throughout training
- An Etiquette Dinner is planned at the end of training to give Peer Leaders an experience that supports their development and aligns with goals for the program
- Facilitators and facilitation styles vary throughout training. There is a lot of small group interaction, as well as hands-on learning
- Lunches are well-planned to incorporate campus partners, faculty, and staff in the conversations
- Breaks are built into the schedule

Supplemental Documents/Common Forms

- [Peer Leader Training Schedule](#)